



Anthropological Survey of India

NEW LETTER

January - March, 2014





Lt. Gen. (Retd) A.K. Singh, Lt. Governor of Andaman & Nicobar Islands being received by Dr. M. Sasi Kumar, Head of Office of the Andaman & Nicobar Islands Regional Centre of the Anthropological Survey of India on his visit to the Regional Centre and the Zonal Anthropological Museum at Port Blair

FROM THE DIRECTOR'S DESK



Dear Readers,

Anthropological Survey of India's strength has always been extensive and long fieldwork based studies and its publications with the narratives. In the quarter beginning January, researchers

went for their reconnaissance studies to the villages identified for the second phase of village studies or else were finalising the reports of the first phase studies. The eighteen final reports of the first phase are being edited in a publishable format while the field work for twenty two villages of the second phase have started in right earnest and the same would complete in 2014-15 to pave way for the third phase.

With the research front being on strong footing, the An.S.I. in the last few years has entered the outreach stage with full strength

and to people's appreciation. In the last quarter, we started with Bastar district followed by Bidar district, Nicobar Islands and finally Dindori district where health awareness camps were held for about three thousand individuals. This means a lot in terms of access, where there was nothing earlier. Another area of our outreach activities was our trials and tribulations to help revive/rejuvenate dying cultural practices for the people's benefit, so that it makes a positive impact on their cultural life.

We held a workshop on endangered tribal languages of south India, held an exhibition in the Raman Science Centre, Nagpur during Science Expo exhibiting the scientific research of AnSI and in Santiniketan on Santal Culture. Production of three documentaries on Himalayan pastoralists and publication activities with added emphases on quality over quantity are the highlights of this quarter. We would report on more activities in our ensuing issues of the Newsletter.

G.S. Rautela
Director

RESEARCH UPDATE

Bio-cultural Diversity, Environment and Sustainable Development

Full complement of researchers including Research Fellows of the An.S.I. has been finalized for all 12th Plan Projects and also for undertaking 2nd phase of village studies under the new Plan Scheme 'Bio-cultural Diversity, Environment and Sustainable Development' during the 12th Five Year Plan for 2014-2015 and field studies have accordingly been initiated. Under the "Bio-cultural Diversity, Environment and Sustainable Development" project for the studies on border areas, deployed research personnel has been finalized and fieldwork was undertaken in an international border area with Nepal.

For the second phase of Village Study, reconnoitre field tour was undertaken in Radhvanj (Kheda district), Kasindara (Ahmedabad district) and Jambor (Junagadh district) of Gujarat, in the Border village of Sultana (Jaisalmer district) of Rajasthan,

Parsa (Madhubani district) of Bihar, Birsingha (West Medinipur district) and Kuotala (Birbhum district) of West Bengal, Lingthem-Tingbong and Dzongu of North Sikkim, Shella and Tyrna of Meghalaya, Jaurasi (Gwalior district) of Madhya Pradesh, Gaon (Pune district) of Maharashtra, Madagada (Visakhapatnam district) of Andhra Pradesh, Rampura (Mysore district) and Hebbale (Kodagu district) of Karnataka, Champakad (Idukki district) of Kerala and Chetlat of Lakshadweep Islands as well as a few other parts of the country.

Brief field work was conducted by all team members, including the Supervisor in Nana Sanjha (Gujarat) and Byrluttigudem (Andhra Pradesh) to finalize reports in a publishable form for submission.

Report writing for the villages studied in the first phase under the project 'Bio-Cultural Diversity, Environment and Sustainable Development' is under process while finalisation of the schedules



Hordes of people from Karnataka pass through Chenchu habitations prior to Ugadi to the Mallikarjuna and Bramarambika temple in Srisailem. The pilgrims are guided by Chenchun through the Nallamala forest trek

Photo courtesy: Dr M.Rajendra Prasad

and updating of information related to second phase of village study is being taken-up as per the resolution of the Executive Committee meeting.

Endangered Language of Toto

A team of research personnel has undertaken fieldwork in Totopara, Jalpaiguri district of West Bengal to study the 'Endangered Language of Toto Tribe'.

Man and Environment

Second phase of field work was undertaken in six core and buffer villages (Kopa, Bona, Janbo, Mrging, Hu-moli and Dembuen) of Dehang-Dibang Biosphere Reserve during February-March to study conservation ethics embedded in the resident villagers' socio-cultural practices and to understand how cultural diversity has contributed towards conservation of biological diversity as well as for the health including nutritional aspects of the population in the Biosphere.

Siwalik Excavation

A team of research personnel has undertaken reconnaissance fieldwork in the Upper Siwalik region of Himachal Pradesh

during February for the Paleo-Anthropology work.

DNA Polymorphism of the Contemporary Indian Populations

Massive screening of mt.DNA sequencing for 24 primer sets has been completed for twenty two communities in the DNA laboratories of the SRC and the Head Office while the work for four more communities is in progress in the SRC.

Analysis of about 450 Gaduliya Lohar, Meena, Damor as well as Mathur samples of Rajasthan for ACE gene polymorphism and about 300 blood samples of Saharia, after initial check for Optical Density, for detecting AGTR1 and CYP polymorphisms is under process.

Bio-Chemical and Genetic Markers of Dyslipidemia

Completed sequence work for 21 sets of primers on 418 samples in connection with the project "BioChemical and Genetic Markers of Dyslipidemia and associated risk factors: A study on Kodavas".

Diabetic Nephropathy

Final report on A Genetic Study of Diabetic Nephropathy among the Indian Populations with reference to Renin- Angiotensin - Aldosterone System (RAAS) Gene Polymorphism was submitted.



A view of the Dehang Dibang Biosphere Reserve of Arunachal Pradesh

EVENTS

Workshop on Endangered Tribal Languages

Under the auspices of 'International School of Anthropology' of the Anthropological Survey of India, the Southern Regional Centre, Mysore organised a workshop 'Endangered Tribal Languages in South India' on 24th & 25th February.

Inauguration of the National Seminar and the Invited Lecture

Shri G.S. Rautela, Director General, National Council of Science Museums and Director, Anthropological Survey of India inaugurated the national Seminar 'Tribal Development in the Context of Forest Rights Act 2006' organised by Indian Institute of Bio-Social Research & Development (IBRAD), Kolkata (18th & 19th February) and delivered an invited lecture 'Inspiring Innovations by the young' on 27th February in a National Seminar 'Science & Technology Policy: The Need for State Specific Appraisal' organised by the Indian Science News Association held at Bose Institute (26 & 27 February). These seminars were also attended by delegates from the Anthropological Survey of India.

Visiting Fellowship

Dr. B. N. Sarkar delivered lectures for the faculty, research scholars and students as an invited Visiting Fellow under the UGC sponsored Special Assistance Programme at the University of Hyderabad, Hyderabad from 4th to 6th March.

Social Inclusion and Ethnographic Studies

Shri D. N. Pandey has participated in the seminar 'Social Inclusion and Ethnographic Studies' held in Central Department of Sociology/Anthropology, Kirtipur, Tribhuvan University, Kathmandu, Nepal from 20th to 21st March.

Executive Committee Meeting

The Executive Committee of the Anthropological Survey of India met on 20th January at its Eastern Regional Centre, Kolkata to discuss targets achieved in project implementation and expenditure till December, 2013 and to examine the month wise action/activities and proposals, as per the approved minutes of the last E.C. meeting.

Visual Anthropology

Visual Anthropology Projects were discussed in a meeting on 4th February and on the occasion, two scholars Mr Vijay Shankar Chowdhury and Ms. Rachna Singh screened their documented material on Dhuni ritual practices of Uttarakhand. Three documentary films on Himalayan pastoralists, directed by Shri Bappa Ray have been completed.



Inauguration Programme of the National Seminar 'Tribal Development in the Context of Forest Rights Act 2006'

Recruitment

Shri Joy Das joined the post of Research Associate (Biochemistry) in CRC, Nagpur and Shri Raj Kumar Satrajit Singh has joined the post of LDC at NERC, Shillong, on a regular appointment.

Departmental Promotion

Shri A. Justin has been offered the position of Deputy Director (Cultural), on the recommendations of the Departmental Promotion Committee.

Dr Harashwaradhana and Dr B.N.Sarkar have been promoted to the post of Superintending Anthropologist (Physical) to join their positions in NWRC, Dehradun and Head Office, Kolkata, respectively.

Shri Anand Saran, Shri Mukesh Sahay and Dr Azeez Mohiddeen have been promoted to the post Assistant Anthropologist (Cultural) to join their positions in NWRC, Dehradun, CRC, Nagpur and SRC, Mysore, respectively.

Shri Prabir Chowdhury, Shri Rana Chakraborty, Dr (Smt.) Shampa Gangopadhyay and Dr (Smt.) Pinuma Barua have been promoted to the post of Assistant Anthropologist (Physical) who have joined their positions in Head Office, Kolkata, WRC, Udaipur, CRC, Nagpur and NERC, Shillong, respectively.

Superannuation

Dr Bibhas Dhar, Superintending Anthropologist (Cultural) and Shri Bachu Prasad Singh, Store Keeper have retired from active Government Service in the month of March, on reaching the age of superannuation.

From Laboratory to the People

Anthropological Survey of India has been holding Health Awareness-cum-Screening camps in the tribal areas, especially in those very pockets which are isolated without access to the health facilities. The An.S.I.'s core competency of studying haemoglobinopathies has developed in to a mission with an inclusive approach to get the vulnerable populations rid of those ailments and deadly anomalies at least in the coming generations. During the months of January-March, Health Awareness-cum-Screening camps were held among Dhurwa in three villages (Kakaalgur, Pedawada and Kutumbhasar) of Kilepal Panchayat, Darbha Block, Bastar district, Chhattisgarh (14th and 16th January), among Tokre Koli in villages (Karkanahalli and Gudithanda) of Bidar district, Karnataka (6th February), among Nicobarese of Harmindar Bay, Little

Andaman and Tapoiming village of Car Nicobar Island (8th and 15th February), A&N Islands and among Baiga and Gond of Chada under Bizag Block of Dindori district in Madhya Pradesh. During these camps, free health check-up by qualified medical professionals, free medicines for common ailments and advice on follow-up treatment for ailments and chronic diseases requiring long term treatment schedule are arranged. Data on screening for genetic disorders like β -Thalassaemia, Sickle Cell Anaemia, G-6PD deficiency etc., free blood sugar check-up, mal-nutrition are collected and subsequently people are made aware of them for record and use. During the camps about three thousand people underwent the health check-up and at places free medicines were also distributed.



Health Awareness Camp, Nicobar, Andaman & Nicobar Islands



Awareness session in progress, Bastar district, Chhattisgarh



Health Awareness Camp, Dindori district, Madhya Pradesh



Congenital blind family in Gudithanda village, Bidar district

Training Programme - cum - Workshops under Tribal Sub - plan

India, a land of diverse traditions has been undergoing change ever since one knows. In the days gone by traditions were lived by people, but it is no longer so. When traditions are not lived, those very traditions and culture with their distinctiveness and identity are lost forever. Much of the local knowledge and native cultures, the world over, have slowly but steadily disappeared. The Eastern Regional Centre of the Anthropological Survey of India in its own way thought it fit to help revive dying practices and to that end has been organizing a series of Training programme-cum-Workshops. Two such programmes held over the last quarter on Performing Arts and Terracotta Art have been complemented by a few more this quarter through January-March under Tribal Sub-Plan, intended to inculcate a spirit to value traditional practices and heritage; thus to supplement the livelihood and earning.

The ones included in this quarter are a fifteen day 'Training Programme-cum-Workshop on Karam Festival of Santal' at Sijua village (January), a 40 day 'Training Programme-cum-Workshop on Preservation and Food Processing of Traditional Foods of Santals' (January - February) at Purangram village, a 'Training Programme-cum-Workshop on Bamboo Crafts of Santals' for ten days (February) in Ramnagar village, a 'Training Programme-cum-Workshop on Ornament making with grass, seed and beads' at Purangram village (February). And an Awareness programme against social evils was also organised on the eve of Baha festival of Santals (March) at Deucha village.

Prof. Sushanta Dattagupta, Vice Chancellor of Visva Bharati inaugurated the exhibition 'Santal Life and Culture'. The exhibition showcased the products of different Training Programme-cum-Workshops along with products related to Santal Life and Culture to a positive response from one and all.



Training on Karam Festival of Santals : Sijua Village, Dumka, Jharkhand



Drama staged during Social Awareness programme on the eve of Baha Festival, Deucha, Birbhum



Training in ornament making with grass and seed, Purangram, Birbhum



Vice Chancellor, Visva Bharati viewing the exhibition 'Santal Life and Culture'

Republic Day 2014



Front Cover: Bakarwal, Jammu & Kashmir

Photo courtesy : Shri Bappa Ray

Renowned film maker, Shri Bappa Ray has recently completed making three films on Himalayan pastoralists, Bakarwal, Changpa and Gaddi for the Anthropological Survey of India



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